

December 5, 2003

Amanda Burden  
Commissioner  
City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

Jerilyn Perine  
Commissioner  
Department of Housing Preservation and Development  
100 Gold Street  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: reaffirmation of commitment to preservation and expansion of housing in Chelsea**

Dear Commissioners Burden and Perine:

At its meeting on December 3, 2003 Manhattan Community Board No. 4 overwhelmingly reaffirmed its commitment to assuring the preservation and expansion of housing in Chelsea for people with a broad range of incomes. The Board recognizes the actions to date of various city agencies in acknowledging our goals, seeking our input and working with us to seek solutions. However, given the importance of this issue to the Board and the limited time remaining before the West Chelsea proposals reach the final form for ULURP, we wish to refocus the City's attention on affordable housing in West Chelsea despite the distractions of competing interests.

Working with the Department of City Planning, the Board agreed to accept greater bulk and density in the proposed rezoning of West Chelsea than is appropriate only with the expectation that its affordable housing goals for the area would be supported by the City's commitment to produce a significant amount of housing for low-, moderate- and middle-income people. CB4's June 6, 2003 response to DCP's proposal strongly encouraged the retention of existing housing and the full use of existing programs and financing mechanisms to expand the stock of affordable housing, but it also stated our belief that other mechanisms must be developed and implemented.

The Department of City Planning and the Department Housing Preservation and Development, in a joint presentation to the Board, outlined existing mechanisms that might generate affordable housing in or near West Chelsea. Since then CB4 has explored possible options with HPD and

has concluded that the existing programs must be tailored to meet the housing needs of a broad range of people of moderate and middle incomes, as well as people of lower incomes. Moreover, CB4 believes more strongly than ever that new options for the creation of affordable housing must be employed in West Chelsea.

The rezoning of West Chelsea and the associated public investment in parks, transportation, sewers and other public infrastructure will create significant private wealth, as well as higher tax revenues for the City from increased property values. CB4 believes that the City should leverage its investment and this increase in value to achieve its stated goal of creating affordable housing.

The Board also urges the study of alternative rezoning for the West Chelsea Special District that requires developers to construct units for rents affordable to people with moderate- and middle-incomes. DCP should work with HPD/HDC to seek and consider the broadest possible range of zoning, financing and policy mechanisms to achieve the Board's housing policy.

Most importantly, CB4 requests a firm commitment from the City to develop housing in Chelsea for people with a broad range of incomes quantified as to site, number of units, targeted program and timeline. The Board will continue to work with DCP and HPD on zoning and housing issues, and expects the City to use every resource available to these and other entities to find, create and implement programs that will achieve the Board's housing goals.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Lee Compton  
Co-Chair  
Chelsea Preservation & Planning Committee



Edward S. Kirkland  
Co-Chair  
Chelsea Preservation & Planning Committee

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President  
Local elected officials  
B. Traylor, HPD  
C. Cirillo, HPD  
V. Chakrabarti, DCP  
L. Blatchford, Mayor's Office